



**Nathan Deal**  
Governor

**Bobby Cagle, MSW**  
Commissioner

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**DECAL to join with Governor Nathan Deal, First Lady Sandra Deal  
and State School Superintendent Dr. John Barge in launching  
2013 “Read Across Georgia”**

***DECAL holding contest for Most Books Read on “Georgia Reads Aloud Day,”  
Tuesday, March 19, 2013, from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM***

**ATLANTA, Ga., (March 4, 2013)** – Governor Nathan Deal, First Lady Sandra Deal, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) Commissioner Bobby Cagle, and State School Superintendent Dr. John Barge are joining together to proclaim March as “Read Across Georgia” Month. The official kickoff will take place on **Monday, March 4, 2013**, at 11:15 AM in the North Wing of the Georgia State Capitol.

As a part of the celebration, DECAL will sponsor “Georgia Reads Aloud Day,” on **Tuesday, March 19, 2013**. On this day, parents, teachers, and the entire community are encouraged to make a special effort to read to children of all ages. Classrooms are encouraged to enter a contest for the Most Books Read between the hours of 7:00 AM and 6:00 PM on March 19. The winning classroom will receive a special visit and reading from First Lady Deal and Commissioner Cagle. Downloadable book lists, bookmarks and certificates for storytellers are available on the DECAL Web site at [www.dec.al.ga.gov](http://www.dec.al.ga.gov). Last year, students across the state read 13,993 books over 13 hours.

“Children model their reading habits by listening to adults,” said Mrs. Deal, who will be reading to children in Fannin, Gilmer and Pickens counties. “It is important for children to learn proper pronunciation, expression, pauses and cadence. It is my hope that Georgia Reads Aloud Day encourages our children to read to others and become young teachers themselves.”

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“Reading can have a huge impact in the lives of our state’s youngest learners and ‘Read Across Georgia’ and ‘Georgia Reads Aloud Day’ are great ways for everyone to get involved,” said Commissioner Cagle. “Both programs support Governor Deal’s goal to have all of Georgia’s children reading on grade level by third grade.”

### **About Bright from the Start**

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia’s children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia’s Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia’s Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages voluntary quality enhancement programs.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to [www.decal.ga.gov](http://www.decal.ga.gov).